

Inherent Risks in Athletics

BASEBALL/SOFTBALL (High School only)

- * Recognize your surroundings; i.e., Batters warming up, thrown bats, batted or thrown balls, on deck circle (one person at a time).
- * Use hard hats while batting, running bases, hitting in batting cages.
- * Familiarize yourself with surroundings and grounds; i.e., fences, field conditions such as holes, lips on infield edges, etc. when playing on away fields.
- * Be aware of the potentially serious injuries to your ankles, knees, and legs if you do not follow the correct procedure in base running. Sliding head first into bases should be avoided.
- * Follow instructions regarding communication between players; i.e., talking and calling each other off on "pop flies" and Texas leaguers, etc.

BASKETBALL

- * Recognize the possible danger from such actions as "undercutting" a player, hanging on the basket, throwing a "wild" pass.

BOWLING (High School only)

- * Be aware of the potentially serious injuries to your ankles, knees, and arm muscles if you do not follow the correct procedures.
- * Never leave premises or practice facility without coach's permission.

CHEER (High School only)

- * Practice stunt prior to the event that you will perform in. Stunts can be very dangerous if not spotted correctly.
- * Lead cheers at the appropriate time so you will be aware of ball and players' positioning to prevent possible injury.
- * Be aware of supervisory staff of both teams and where they can be located so they may be contacted in case of an emergency or an undesirable crowd control situation.

CROSS COUNTRY

- * Run only on the course prescribed by the coach.
- * Run in pairs in unfamiliar territory or in areas where there are few people.
- * Watch for objects being thrown from passing cars.
- * Approach dogs with caution.
- * Be familiar with basic first aid treatment for heat exhaustion, heat stroke, sprained ankle, or other runner related injuries.
- * Face the oncoming traffic when running on the roads. Be cautious at intersections and be acutely aware of erratic drivers and the location of vehicles at all times.

FOOTBALL (High School only)

Tackling, Blocking and Running the Ball

- * Tackling and blocking techniques are basically the same. Contact is to be made above the belt, but not initially with the helmet. The player should always be in a position of balance, knees bent, back straight, body slightly bent forward, head up and the target area as near to the body as possible with the main contact being made with the shoulder. When properly blocking or tackling an opponent, contact with your helmet will naturally result. Therefore, technique is most important in order to prevent or reduce the likelihood of injury.
- * Blocking and tackling by not keeping the helmet as close to the body as possible may result in a shoulder injury and a separation or a pinched nerve in the neck area. Injuries as a result of improper techniques can range from minor to disabling or even death. Improper body alignment can put the spinal column in a vulnerable position for injury. The development of strength in the neck muscles through isometric-type exercises will enable the participant to hold his/her head up even after getting tired during a workout or contest.

Basic Hitting (Contact) Position and Fundamental Technique

- * Strained muscle injuries can range from ankle injuries to serious knee injuries requiring surgery. The rules have made blocking below the waist (outside a two-yard by four-yard area next to the football) illegal.
- * Cleats are restricted to no more than one-half inch to further help prevent knee injuries. A runner with the ball, however, may be tackled around the legs.
- * In tackling, the rules prohibit initial contact with the helmet or grabbing the face mask on the edge of the helmet. Initial contact may result in a bruise; dislocation; broken bone; head injury; or internal injury such as kidneys, spleen, bladder, etc. Grabbing the face mask or helmet edge may result in a neck injury which could result in injuries ranging from a muscle strain to a dislocation, nerve injury, or spinal column damage which could cause paralysis or death.

Equipment

- * An athlete is required to wear all issued equipment. If equipment is damaged or does not fit correctly, the athlete must inform his coach immediately before use. Shoulder pads, helmets, hip pads, and pants (including thigh pads and knee pads) must have proper fitting and use.
- * A shoulder pad which is too small will leave the shoulder point vulnerable to bruises or separations. A shoulder pad that is too tight in the neck area may result in a possible pinched nerve. A shoulder pad which is too large will leave the neck area poorly protected and will slide on the shoulders making them vulnerable to bruises or separations. Helmets must fit snugly at the contact points; front, back, and top of head. The helmet must be safety "NOCSAE" branded, the chin straps must be fastened, and the cheek pads must be of the proper thickness. A fit which is too loose could result in headaches, a concussion, a face injury such as a broken nose or cheekbone, or a neck injury that is possibly quite serious such as paralysis or even death.

GOLF

- * Before swinging the club, make certain that the area around you is clear of others. Be careful after hitting not to throw the club as you could injure someone.
- * Be aware of the danger of standing in front of or on the side of a person who is attempting to hit the ball, as one may be injured by the ball or by the rebounding of the ball from trees, signs, markers, etc.
- * Be aware at all times of other players' positions on the course when you are hitting or when they are hitting. You are vulnerable at all times. Do not hit the ball until proper distance is available between golfing groups. If you observe a ball off course, make any nearby group aware of its existence by shouting or other appropriate means.
- * Keep hands and grips dry to minimize the danger of clubs being released.

SOCCER

- * Use equipment that complies with FIFA and/or WIAA rules, e.g., footwear, shin guards.
- * Comply with soccer rules with special attention given to avoiding such violations as: kicking or attempting to kick an opponent, tripping an opponent, jumping at an opponent, charging an opponent from behind, charging violently at an opponent, striking or attempting to strike an opponent, holding an opponent, pushing an opponent, and playing in a manner considered by the referee to be dangerous such as kicking at a shoulder high ball when an opponent is trying to head it.

SWIM & DIVE (High School only)

- * Know the location of rescue equipment in the pool area.
- * Never enter the water without the coach (or designated lifeguard) in the pool area.
- * Check for clear water before swimming and diving; and when diving off the blocks, make it a shallow dive. Diving will be permitted only by divers who have been taught basic swimming and diving skills and are under the supervision of a coach.
- * Do not dive or enter the water head-first, in an area not so designated or in less than 5 feet of water at anytime.
- * Do not run while on the pool deck.

TENNIS (High School only)

- * Before swinging a racquet, make certain that the area around you is clear of others. Ensure that your equipment is in proper working and acceptable condition.
- * Familiarize yourself with court surface/obstacles on courts before beginning play.
- * Be conscious of your partner's position on the court in doubles play.

TRACK & FIELD

- * Recognize the safety rules for restricted areas, e.g., javelin, discus, shot put, pole vault. These areas must be supervised.
- * Stay on the designated running courses.
- * Check equipment, apparatus, field and pits thoroughly before each use, e.g., debris in jumping pits, placement of standards.

VOLLEYBALL

- * Be aware of court surroundings, i.e., obstacles, projections, bleachers, standards, etc.

WRESTLING

- * Recognize illegal holds as defined by the rule book.
- * Wear approved, proper-fitting apparel when wrestling with an opponent, either in practice or in a match.
- * Wrestle a safe distance from all walls and other obstructions. All wrestling will be done on the mats provided for wrestling.

The above information has been explained to me and I understand the list of rules and procedures. I also understand the necessity of using the proper techniques while participating in all of the sports programs. Because of the dangers of the above sports, I recognize the importance of following coaches' instructions regarding techniques, training and other team rules, etc., and to agree to obey such instruction. I am aware that the above sports are **HIGH-RISK SPORTS** and that practicing or competing in the above sports will be a dangerous and unpredictable activity involving **MANY RISKS OF INJURY**. I understand that the dangers and risks of practicing and competing in the above sports include, but are not limited to, death, serious neck and spinal injuries which may result in complete or partial paralysis, brain damage, blindness, serious injury to virtually all internal organs, serious injury to virtually all bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, tendons and other aspects of my body, general health and well-being. I understand that the dangers and risks of practicing or competing in the above sports may result not only in serious injury, but in a serious impairment of my future abilities to earn a living, to engage in other business, social and recreational activities and generally to enjoy life.

We agree that neither the school district, nor the staff of the school district, nor the student organization of the school district shall in any way be held liable for any accident or injury in any way received on account of or while engaged in any athletic activity sponsored by the district. We further agree that neither the district nor any of their staff or student organizations shall be responsible for the payment of any bills rendered for medical services as a result of such accidents or injuries. We also acknowledge that it is our responsibility to provide for any medical, disability or other insurance to mitigate any costs that may be unfortunately incurred as a result of participation in this activity.